Cuppa flows over: Tea for thought at show

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Do you know that your morning cuppa comes with a rich and varied history, that it was a point of contention among eminent nationalists and played a key role in bringing about socio-economic change?

An exhibition on tea advertising titled, From an Imperial Product to a National Drink: Changing Images in the Culture of Tea Drinking in Modern India, begins on December 7 at Gagnendra Pradarshashala. It maps the social practices and cultural nuances that have been associated with tea drinking for over a century. The seven-day show organised by the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC), will feature sections called Th: Raj and the Tea; Trend to Drink, Time to Oppose; A Drink for a Nation: Nation and its aesthetics; Camera Lucida and Afterthoughts. It will have photographs of billboards and newspaper advertisements, posters, calendars, cartoons, drawings, illustrations, lobby cards of theatres, actual billboards featuring tea ads and several artifacts like the sand dial, samovar and teaset. A book on the history of tea drinking will also be launched at the inauguration.

"The exhibition has contributions from private collector Parimal Ray and the Hitesh Ranjan Memorial archive," says Goutam Bhadra, professor of history at the CSSSC, who has conceptualised, researched and

One of the ads that will be on display at the exhibition put together the exhibition. Every section has a story. "With the birth of nationalism, tea — viewed as a drink of the British — heated up an exchange of conflicting ideas. Rabindranath Tagore, Ananda Shaw and Rajshekhar Basu cudgels on behalf through the written Prafulla Chandra Ray lighted its ills throughtures," says Indira, member of the CSS Nation And Its Aesthetics on creative ad tea — where tea is cerebral tonic. This showcases works of trious names in the like Makhan Dutta Rananarayan Dutta bani Ganguly, incl published drawings Munshi," says Bhd Lacida is devoted to images of tea drink like Mahanagar, Ch Dui Purush and Ag. Apart from film stills will also have amateur lensmen captured the stark of the two cultures — ing around road-side and the other conifer plush drawing room.